

## **Department of the Attorney General**

In the area of law enforcement, the department succeeded in placing four constitutional amendments on the ballot that would:

- Give the public a right of access to information about convicted sex offenders in keeping with Megan's Amendment (SB2843);
- Protect the confidentiality of communications between victims of crime and their counselors or physicians (SB2846);
- Assist prosecutors when they charge continuing criminal offenses in cases involving the sexual abuse of children (HB2789); and
- Allow criminal offenses to be charged on the basis of a prosecutor's information, rather than requiring a grand jury or preliminary hearing (SB2851);

In addition, the department worked to pass legislation that:

- Added child pornographers to the list of sex offenders (SB2842);
- Made it a felony offense to illegally dump solid waste (HB 2375); and
- Created a habitual property crime offense (SB2844).

In the civil arena, the department:

- Provided for more effective regulation of nonprofit entities and helped put in place a system whereby the public will learn how much of their donations are going to a charity and how much to fundraisers (SB2839 and HB2363);
- Improved enforcement of our tobacco laws by making it significantly more difficult to sell cigarettes over the Internet and through mail order to Hawai'i residents (SB2840);
- Helped make certain the Child Support Enforcement Agency would get increased federal funds and avoid monetary penalties (HB2385); and
- Made certain that all boards and attached agencies of the state are cloaked with the same sovereign immunity enjoyed by the state (HB2378).

At the same time, the majority party turned back many of the department's efforts to fight crime in Hawai'i. These missed opportunities occurred when the majority party refused to:

- Enact a tough new bribery law (SB2848).
- Enact needed amendments to our electronic surveillance law (SB2447).
- Require those who retail cigarettes to hold licenses, thus hurting our efforts to keep cigarettes out of the hands of children (SB2841).
- Enact tough new sentencing reform (SB2844 as originally drafted).
- Enact a tough new law on drunk driving (HB2374, SB 2849).
- Afford the state the same protections in civil suits the United States and most states enjoy (SB2856). This lack of protection costs the state millions of dollars annually.
- Pass a bill that would help the state in its efforts to go after those who cheat and defraud the state (SB2835).
- Reduce post-judgment interest rates to a reasonable 6 percent (HB2362 and SB2837). By contrast, federal post-judgment interest rates currently hover between 1 and 2 percent.

- Mark Bennett, State Attorney General